

HN16 RUDENKO

BY CHARLES H. KLENSCH
MOSCOW, JULY 23--(INS)--SOVIET AIR MARSHAL S. I. RUDENKO SAID
TONIGHT THE REASON SOVIET PILOTS WERE NOT ORDERED TO SHOOT AT ALLEGED
AMERICAN PLANES WHICH REPUTEDLY FLEW OVER WESTERN RUSSIA WAS BECAUSE
THE SOVIETS DID NOT WANT TO INCREASE INTERNATIONAL TENSION.

RUDENKO MADE THE STATEMENT TO WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS AT THE EGYPTIAN
EMBASSY IN MOSCOW. HE WAS ONE OF NEARLY A DOZEN SOVIET MARSHALS TO
ATTEND AN EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES DAY RECEPTION AT THE EMBASSY.

THE SOVIET DEPUTY AIR FORCE CHIEF SAID THE AMERICAN PLANES, ALLEGED
TO HAVE "INVADED" SOVIET AIR SPACE IN EARLY JULY, WERE FLYING AT
EXTREMELY HIGH ALTITUDES AND COULD NOT BE IDENTIFIED BY MARKINGS.

HE SAID THEY WERE TOO FAR AWAY FROM SOVIET FLIERS WHO SPOTTED THEM
FROM THE AIR.

BUT RUDENKO ADDED:

"OUR FLIERS KNOW AMERICAN AIRCRAFT TYPES."

ASKED WHY THE RUSSIANS DID NOT SHOOT AT THE ALLEGED AMERICAN PLANES
AS THEY HAD DONE IN THE PAST OVER THE SEA OF JAPAN AND IN THE BALTIC,
RUDENKO REPLIED:

"OUR AIRCRAFT HAD INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO SHOOT. YOU KNOW WHAT OUR
POLICY IS NOW -- TO AVOID SHARPENING INTERNATIONAL TENSION."

RUDENKO ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT EACH SUCH CASE WOULD BE DECIDED
INDIVIDUALLY. SOVIET FLIERS WERE ORDERED TO CONTACT HEADQUARTERS FOR
INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE FIRING.

RUDENKO SAID HEADQUARTERS FOR INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE FIRING.

RUDENKO SAID HEADQUARTERS WOULD DECIDE ON THE FOLLOWING BASIS:

"IF IT IS A CASUAL VIOLATION OF SOVIET BORDER AIR SPACE, THEY HAVE
INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO SHOOT. BUT IF IT IS DELIBERATE AND CONTINUOUS,
THEY WILL ACT ACCORDINGLY."

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, RUDENKO WAS ASKED, IF THE PLANES THE RUSSIANS
THOUGHT WERE AMERICAN FLEW OVER AGAIN.

HE REPLIED:

"YOU SAW WHAT THE NOTE (TO WASHINGTON) SAID -- IT WOULD BE
AMERICA'S RESPONSIBILITY."

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